

**General Assembly**

Fifty-ninth session

First Committee**10th meeting**Monday, 18 October 2004, 10 a.m.
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Official Records

President: Mr. De Alba (Mexico)*The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.***Agenda items 57 to 72****Thematic discussion on item subjects and introduction and consideration of all draft resolutions submitted under all disarmament and international security agenda items**

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with the programme of work and timetable, today the Committee will begin the second phase of its work, devoted to thematic discussion on item subjects as well as introduction and consideration of all draft resolutions submitted under disarmament and international security agenda items.

I would like to stress that during this stage of our work, I will maintain a certain degree of flexibility, as I have done in previous meetings of the Committee, in order to facilitate the participation of delegations in the formal and informal parts of the meetings.

In conformity with the decisions on the rationalization of the work of the First Committee, during this phase of our work, the Committee will strive to combine discussion of items with the introduction of the corresponding draft resolutions. As delegations will recall, the timetable for these discussions is contained in A/C.1/59/CRP.2, in which the heading of the section on education should be "Education for disarmament and non-proliferation".

As I have stated, in the second phase of the Committee's work I intend to divide the thematic discussions into three segments so that the Committee can make the best use of the time allotted to it and try to find approaches for a more in-depth dialogue, using an unrecorded, interactive format in the middle part of these meetings. It is important that everyone be aware that only the first and last sections of each meeting will appear in the verbatim records.

I invite delegations to keep their statements as brief as possible in order to preserve a format of fluid discussion and give all speakers the greatest possible opportunity for interaction. We want to discuss nuclear weapons in a certain degree of detail, and not repeat the general debate.

When we have heard the last speaker, I will invite Ms. Patricia Lewis, in her capacity as an expert, to introduce the second segment of the Committee's work.

Mr. Sanders (Netherlands): Mr. Chairman, I heard your plea to make short statements, but I am afraid that this statement is not very short. Bear in mind, however, that I speak on behalf of more than 30 countries. At least, it is shorter than 30 times five minutes.

I have the honour to take the floor on behalf of the European Union. The candidate countries Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania and Turkey, the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former

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Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia and Montenegro and the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.

As in last year's general debate of the First Committee, as well as in last April's general debate in the Preparatory Committee for the Review Conference of Parties to the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the European Union wants to reiterate that it regards the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime and the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament under the Treaty's article VI. The integrity of the NPT must be preserved and strengthened.

The possession of nuclear weapons by States outside the NPT and non-compliance with the Treaty's provisions by States parties to the Treaty risk undermining non-proliferation and disarmament efforts. Therefore, the European Union continues to attach special importance to achieving universal adherence to the NPT. We therefore call on the three States that are not at present parties to the NPT to accede unconditionally as non-nuclear-weapon States. We also call on all States parties to comply fully with the Treaty.

The European Union considers a positive outcome of the upcoming 2005 Review Conference to be of crucial importance in preserving the integrity of the NPT. The European Union supports wholeheartedly the objectives laid down in the Treaty and is committed to the effective implementation of the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference and the decisions and the resolution adopted at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference. We especially attach great importance to the issues of universality and compliance, underlining the importance of all three pillars of the NPT: non-proliferation, nuclear disarmament and the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. The European Union will do its utmost to achieve a positive outcome.

The European Union considers a nuclear non-proliferation regime of universal character, supported by a strong system of international safeguards, to be an essential prerequisite for collective security. International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards constitute the NPT's operational

verification instrument. Challenges to the Treaty and to the non-proliferation regime have in recent years emphasized the necessity of full compliance and the need to work actively towards universal adherence. The European Union is fully committed to the NPT and to the three mutually reinforcing pillars on which it is based. The European Union will continue its efforts to maintain the authority and the integrity of the Treaty.

The EU believes that the international safeguards system of the IAEA is the fundamental pillar of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. It is a technical instrument in support of the political goal of sustaining an environment in which there can be peaceful use of nuclear energy without the diversion of nuclear material or the concealment of nuclear material or nuclear activities directed to nuclear weapons.

The EU considers the universal adoption and implementation of comprehensive safeguards agreements and of additional protocols to them to be a prerequisite to an effective and credible safeguards system. Together, the IAEA comprehensive safeguards agreements and the additional protocols constitute the verification standard. The EU strongly supports the strengthening of the IAEA's safeguards system and considers that additional protocols are an integral part of the IAEA comprehensive safeguards system. We consider adherence to them to be an essential means of demonstrating fulfilment of States parties' obligations under article III of the NPT. EU member States are working towards making additional protocols a condition of supply for nuclear exports.

Following the entry into force of the Additional Protocol for the EU on 30 April this year, the Additional Protocol is now in the process of being implemented by all States members of the enlarged EU. The EU urges all States that have not yet done so to sign an additional protocol at the first possible opportunity. The EU urges all States that have signed but not yet brought into force their respective safeguards agreements and additional protocols to do so as soon as possible.

The illicit trade related to weapons of mass destruction, in particular the trade in highly sensitive nuclear equipment and technology, is a matter of serious concern. The reality of that illicit trade became clear with the revelation of clandestine networks supplying elements for conversion and centrifuge programmes. We fully endorse the call of the Director

General of the IAEA for full cooperation from all IAEA member States in identifying the supply routes, sources of technology and related equipment. We must be united in our common endeavour to strengthen the non-proliferation regimes by closing existing loopholes. The European Union is therefore committed, in its strategy, to strong national and internationally coordinated export controls, which we consider a necessary complement to our non-proliferation obligations under the NPT. In that context, the EU strongly supports Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), which, *inter alia*, calls upon all States, in accordance with their national legal authorities and legislation and consistent with international law, to take cooperative action to prevent illicit trafficking in nuclear, chemical or biological weapons, their means of delivery and related materials. In that context, the EU also reiterates its support for the Proliferation Security Initiative, also known as the Krakow Initiative.

The EU policy is to pursue an international agreement on the prohibition of the production of nuclear materials for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. The EU attaches special importance to the negotiation of a non-discriminatory and universal treaty banning the production of such fissile material, which would strengthen both nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament and thus international security. The EU and its member States have actively worked in the Conference on Disarmament in the search for a consensus to launch a negotiation on the basis of the report of the Special Coordinator and the mandate it contains. Until a cut-off treaty enters into force, all States are urged to declare a moratorium on the production of fissile material destined for nuclear weapons. The EU welcomes the actions of those of the five nuclear-weapon-States that have such a moratorium in place.

The EU believes that the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is an essential part of the disarmament and non-proliferation regime. That was reaffirmed in the general joint ministerial declaration of 23 September 2004 during the ministerial week of the General Assembly. At that meeting, Ministers of Foreign Affairs once again expressed their support for the CTBT. They affirmed that the CTBT is to make an important contribution to one of the most important challenges the world is facing today: preventing the proliferation of materials,

technologies and knowledge that can be used for nuclear weapons.

The EU reiterates that it attaches the utmost importance to the entry into force of the CTBT at the earliest possible date. That is why the EU continues to call on those States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the CTBT, without delay and without conditions. In particular, we call for early ratification by the so-called annex-II countries: States whose ratification is necessary for the Treaty to enter into force. The EU believes that a legally binding prohibition of nuclear-weapon-test explosions and all other nuclear explosions, as well as a credible verification regime, are vital.

The EU strongly supports the work of the Special Representative of the ratifying States, Mr. Jaap Ramaker. Mr. Ramaker will visit several of the annex-II countries this autumn to promote universal adherence to the CTBT. Progress is being made, and, at this moment, 11 more ratifications are required to achieve that goal. We hope to move closer to entry into force of the Treaty and to work towards its universality, because global adherence to the Treaty can contribute to the prevention of the proliferation of nuclear weapons, to the process of nuclear disarmament and, therefore, to the enhancement of international peace and security. Pending the entry into force of the CTBT, the EU urges all States to abide by a moratorium and to refrain from any actions that are contrary to the obligations and provisions of the CTBT.

There are concerns about the nuclear programmes of a number of countries. These relate in particular to civilian nuclear programmes which might be misused for military ends. In that context, the EU notes with interest the ongoing discussion on measures to strengthen control over the most sensitive parts of the fuel cycle.

The Iranian nuclear programme continues to be a matter of grave concern for the EU. The EU recalls previous resolutions on this issue and the declaration of 19 June 2003, and it fully supports resolution GOV/2004/79 of the IAEA Board of Governors and calls on Iran to immediately comply with all requirements in the resolution.

The EU welcomes the fact that with regard to the implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement in the Islamic Republic of Iran, the IAEA seems to have an increasingly clear understanding of the nature and

the extent of Iran's nuclear programme. However, it is a matter of serious concern that after two years, a number of issues still await clarification. The EU therefore reiterates the call on Iran, as stated in the resolution adopted by the IAEA Board of Governors on 18 September, to assist the IAEA to understand the full extent and the nature of its enrichment programme and to take all steps within its power to clarify the outstanding issues before the next Board meeting. It also stresses that voluntary suspension of enrichment-related and reprocessing activities, as called for by the Board, would provide the Board with additional confidence in Iran's future activities and considers it necessary to promote confidence that Iran immediately suspend all enrichment-related activities.

We welcome Iran's submission of the declarations under articles 2 and 3 of its Additional Protocol and note the cooperation provided to the Agency following detailed discussions in July and August 2004. We urge Iran to continue to enhance that cooperation and urge Iran once again to ratify its Protocol without delay.

The EU continues to deplore the announcement by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in January 2003 of its intention to withdraw from the NPT. The EU will not cease to urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to completely, verifiably and irreversibly dismantle any clandestine nuclear weapons programme. The EU restates its firm resolve to contribute to the search for a peaceful solution, through negotiations, to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea nuclear issue and particularly welcomes the dialogue within the framework of the six-party talks. The EU looks forward to the fourth round of the six-party talks, as the parties agreed in June 2004.

We strongly urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to come unconditionally into full compliance with all its relevant international commitments. It should comply in particular with its IAEA Safeguards Agreement under the NPT, as a first step, by allowing the re-establishment of the required containment and surveillance measures at its nuclear facilities and the full implementation of all the required safeguards measures at all times, including the return of IAEA inspectors.

The EU has warmly welcomed Libya's decision to eliminate all material, equipment and programmes

which lead to the production of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). The EU has also welcomed Libya's ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and of its signature and decision to implement an Additional Protocol. The EU encourages Libya to continue its good cooperation with the IAEA and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in implementing its decision. The case of Libya demonstrates that the problems of proliferation can, with good will, be tackled through discussion and engagement, that countries can abandon programmes voluntarily and peacefully and that States have nothing to fear from coming forward and admitting non-compliance.

The EU attaches great importance to the development and strengthening, wherever possible, of internationally recognized nuclear-weapon-free zones, based on arrangements freely arrived at among States of the region. These zones enhance global and regional peace and security — urgently needed, as the present political environment indicates — and are a means to promote nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, stability and confidence. We therefore welcome and support the signature and ratification by the nuclear weapon States of the relevant protocols on nuclear-weapons-free zones following the completion of the necessary consultations.

The EU also underlines the importance of the concept of zones free of weapons of mass destruction, both nuclear and other, and their means of delivery, envisaged in Security Council resolution 687 (1991), on the Middle East. We call upon all States in the region to establish an effectively verifiable zone free of nuclear weapons, as well as of other weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery.

The EU believes the protocol to the Treaty of Bangkok that establishes the South East Asia nuclear-weapon-free zone is close to conclusion. The EU welcomes the efforts of the Association of South-East Asian Nations and hopes that issues that we understand have been outstanding since late 2002 can be addressed and resolved quickly.

The EU appeals to the remaining States parties to the Treaty of Pelindaba which have yet to ratify the treaty in order to bring it into force to do so without delay.

The EU recognizes the continuing high value of the existing legally binding security assurances, as

provided through the protocols to the treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones and through unilateral declarations by nuclear weapons States — noted by Security Council resolution 984 (1995) and reaffirmed at the sixth NPT Review Conference — to non-nuclear weapon States parties to the NPT on the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. The EU Strategy on Weapons of Mass Destruction indicates that positive and negative security assurances can play an important role in the NPT regime. They can serve both as an incentive to forego the acquisition of WMD and as a deterrent. In our WMD Strategy, we are committed to promoting further consideration of Strategy assurances.

Ms. Borslin Ponnler (Sweden): I am taking the floor on behalf of the seven members of the New Agenda Coalition: Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa and my own country, Sweden.

On 4 October, in the general debate of this Committee (see A/C.1/59/PV.2), we presented our common assessment of the overall political situation with regard to nuclear disarmament. Later today, we will introduce our draft resolution under this agenda item. At this point, I would just like to make some additional remarks on a few nuclear issues which we consider essential.

The core of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is that non-nuclear-weapon States will not develop nuclear weapons, in return for which the nuclear weapon States will reduce and eliminate their nuclear arsenals; the right to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy is accorded to all. The NPT must be upheld in its entirety. The commitments made within the framework of the NPT and its 1995 and 2000 Review Conferences require full implementation. We all need to enhance our efforts to make the treaty universal.

The agreement on nuclear disarmament at the 2000 NPT Review Conference included an unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States to eliminate their nuclear arsenals. A practical plan for progressive and systematic efforts to pursue nuclear disarmament was unanimously adopted. It remains to be implemented.

One of the most important commitments at the 2000 NPT Review Conference was to pursue the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). We welcome the fact that three of

the nuclear-weapon States have signed and ratified the Treaty and call upon the other two — and on other remaining key States — to do the same as a matter of priority. In the meantime, the moratoriums on nuclear testing and on nuclear explosive devices need to be upheld.

The next logical step in the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation process is to start negotiations on a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, taking into account both nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation objectives. Such negotiations are long overdue. Such a treaty would ban the production of enriched uranium and plutonium for nuclear weapons, without hampering the right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It would form a new cornerstone in the process of nuclear disarmament. It would impose restraints also on non-NPT parties — India, Israel and Pakistan — and, together with the CTBT, would go a long way towards upholding the NPT and strengthening the norms on nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament. Until such a treaty is concluded, moratoriums on fissile material production need to be upheld.

We would like to see further reductions of nuclear weapons, including non-strategic nuclear weapons. As an interim measure, the operational status of nuclear weapons systems should be reduced. Thousands of nuclear weapons have yet to be eliminated. The Strategic Offensive Reduction Treaty between Russia and the United States is a step in the right direction, but it does not require the destruction of those weapons and does not have any verification provisions. The process is neither irreversible nor transparent. As an important transparency measure, and to promote confidence, we continue to stress the importance of regular reporting by all nuclear-weapon States in the context of the NPT.

We also believe that our possibilities for addressing some of the current security concerns would be greatly advanced if the Conference on Disarmament could establish subsidiary bodies to deal with nuclear disarmament and with the prevention of an arms race in outer space, respectively.

Our support for nuclear-weapon-free zones remains as strong as ever. It is important that the nuclear-weapon States continue to uphold and reiterate

their commitments with regard to security assurances pending the conclusion of legally binding security assurances for all non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT.

Mr. Trezza (Italy): I wish, first of all, to fully endorse the statement made by the representative of the Netherlands on behalf of the European Union. I also wish to refer to Ambassador Sander's statement at the 2nd meeting, during our general debate, in which he indicated, on behalf of the European Union, that one of the instruments for dealing with the threat of weapons of mass destruction is the Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) initiative targeted at supporting disarmament and controlling and securing sensitive materials, facilities and expertise.

On 28 September Italy sponsored a seminar in Geneva on that initiative, which is gaining increasing attention within the international disarmament process. The seminar was a follow-up to a statement on the same subject made by my country at the Conference on Disarmament on 20 January and to a presentation made last April in the Preparatory Committee for the 2005 Review Conference of Parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), on the relevance of the CTR for the nuclear non-proliferation process. An official document was presented on that occasion.

I take the opportunity of this thematic debate to draw the attention of the Committee to this issue for the first time in a comprehensive manner. The CTR is one of the most significant developments that has taken place in the past few years in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation. It involves a growing number of countries. It has been widely debated in the Group of Eight (G-8) and the EU and has received wide attention from disarmament scholars. However, it has rarely been discussed in multilateral disarmament forums. The CTR initiative was originally developed in the early 1990s and was inspired by Senators Nunn and Lugar of the United States. It refers to the process of international cooperation and assistance, through which a large number of nuclear warheads and delivery systems have been destroyed or deactivated and weapons of mass destruction (WMD) materials have been placed in safe storage. The CTR is particularly relevant to nuclear disarmament. That is why I am making this presentation under this cluster. However, the CTR also concerns other weapons of mass destruction: chemical, biological and radiological.

The implementation of disarmament commitments has brought to the international community's attention the fact that those commitments, be they multilateral, plurilateral or unilateral, are meaningless unless the weapons involved are either physically destroyed or appropriately disposed of. Over the years, the enormous technical and financial problems connected with the actual elimination of armaments, both conventional and non-conventional, have also come to the surface. The CTR is a multilateral effort aimed at addressing those problems.

Belarus, Canada, Kazakhstan, Japan, the European Union and many of its member States on the national level, the Russian Federation, Ukraine, the United States, Uzbekistan and other countries have worked together under the CTR initiative to secure, dismantle and safeguard weapons of mass destruction, their delivery systems and infrastructures.

The culminating moment of this initiative took place in Kananaskis, Canada, in June 2002, when the leaders of the G-8 announced a Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction. Participants at the Kananaskis Summit pledged to raise up to \$20 billion over the following 10 years to address those threats and, in particular, to prevent terrorists or those who harbour them from acquiring or developing nuclear, chemical, radiological and biological weapons or missiles and related materials equipment and technologies. In addition to those important financial pledges, the G-8 leaders agreed on a comprehensive set of non-proliferation principles, as well as on guidelines for implementation.

The Cooperative Threat Reduction programme has become one of the important instruments of the European Strategy against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The sum of €1.6 billion was cited at a conference in Strasbourg last year as the total past and future financial commitment of the European Union, notably within the Kananaskis commitments and an ad hoc action plan.

It is our belief that the time has come to present this concept to the First Committee. The essence of our message is that not only do we have to face the problem of negotiating disarmament agreements; we also have to deal with the additional problem of actually destroying those weapons. In some cases, this requires international cooperation, although the

primary responsibility of countries for destruction and safety should remain unchanged.

We are not proposing at this stage an ad hoc resolution on this subject; we rather suggest a horizontal approach. We believe that the CTR concept should be reflected in certain relevant First Committee draft resolutions. I refer in particular to those dealing with weapons of mass destruction disarmament.

We have already approached, on a bilateral basis, some delegations that are sponsoring those draft resolutions and have drawn their attention to the relevance of the CTR process to their texts. I wish to thank them for their interest and for their initial positive response. The CTR also has significant environmental implications, since weapons elimination projects are to be implemented in an environmentally sound manner. This process might therefore also be of interest to sponsors of draft resolutions dealing with the link between disarmament and environmental standards.

I address the Committee not only to describe this new reality, but also to indicate our readiness to provide further explanations of this initiative and to propose additional language for future First Committee documents.

Mr. Mine (Japan): Before I introduce a draft resolution on nuclear disarmament later in this session, I would like to explain our basic view of nuclear disarmament. Recent challenges to the regime of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), such as non-compliance and the proliferation of nuclear-related technology through underground nuclear proliferation networks, have highlighted the urgency of further efforts on the part of States parties to maintain and strengthen the NPT regime. The early peaceful resolution of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea nuclear issue is essential for securing peace and stability in North-East Asia, including Japan, and also for strengthening the international nuclear non-proliferation regime.

Japan cannot, under any circumstances, accept any development, acquisition, possession, test or transfer of nuclear weapons by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We continue to call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to ensure complete dismantlement of all its nuclear programmes under credible and international verification. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea should observe

all the international agreements relating to nuclear issues, including the NPT. In order to resolve the Democratic People's Republic of Korea nuclear issue peacefully through dialogue, Japan is ready to continue to make every effort towards a resolution by diplomatic means, primarily by actively contributing to the six-party talks process.

With regard to the Iranian nuclear issue, it is essential for Iran to sincerely implement all the requests made by the International Atomic Energy Agency Board of Governors in its resolutions since September 2003. It is indispensable that Iran remove the serious concerns of the international community through efforts to promote increased transparency. Japan sincerely hopes that the Iranian nuclear issue will be resolved, as soon as possible, through Iran's further efforts.

Japan welcomes Libya's decision to abandon all its weapons of mass destruction programmes. Japan sincerely hopes that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and those States under suspicion of engaging in the development of weapons of mass destruction will follow Libya's example.

Nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament are mutually reinforcing. Hence, both need to be promoted. Both nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States must remain fully committed to their obligations and commitments under the NPT. With a view to achieving the universality of the Treaty, Japan again calls upon States not parties to the NPT to accede to it as non-nuclear-weapon States, without conditions and without delay.

The ongoing challenges to the NPT regime mean that the 2005 NPT Review Conference has special significance. Japan very much appreciates Ambassador Duarte's tireless efforts in preparing for the Review Conference. In the light of the current international situation, issues concerning nuclear non-proliferation are likely to be the main focus of the Conference. Nevertheless, nuclear-weapon States continue to bear a heavy responsibility for maintaining and strengthening the NPT regime.

I would like to emphasize the following points as States parties prepare for the forthcoming Review Conference. Firstly, it is important to set clear objectives for the 2005 Review Conference, as it will be held under circumstances and conditions that differ from those that pertained at the 1995 and 2000 Review

Conferences. Secondly, it is imperative to commence negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty before the 2005 Review Conference, as that would make a positive contribution to the strengthening of the NPT regime. Thirdly, it is important to consider effective measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring nuclear weapons or related materials.

Japan attaches great importance to certain specific measures with a view to maintaining and strengthening the NPT regime, such as the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), the early commencement of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty, the universalization of the International Atomic Energy Agency's additional protocol, disarmament and non-proliferation education and measures to deal with non-compliance. Japan will work together with other States parties to contribute to reaching consensus on such specific measures.

The CTBT is one of the major pillars of the NPT regime. Japan places great importance on its early entry into force, and has been making various contributions to that end. The number of countries which have ratified the CTBT has been steadily increasing. Japan welcomes the ratification by the Democratic Republic of the Congo — one of the countries whose ratification is necessary for the Treaty's entry into force. Japan calls upon the remaining 11 countries to follow suit.

Japan, together with Australia, Finland and the Netherlands, hosted the second "Friends of the CTBT" meeting last month here in New York. A joint ministerial statement was issued, calling upon all States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the Treaty without delay. A moratorium on nuclear-weapon-test explosions should be continued, pending the entry into force of the Treaty.

Japan continues to attach the utmost importance to the early commencement of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty and welcomes the reaffirmation by the United States of its support for that project. Japan believes that the time is right for negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty, and that we should therefore harness the momentum and commence negotiations early next year, prior to the start of the 2005 NPT Review Conference. All related work should be devoted to that end, and differing views among member States should be dealt with in the course of the negotiations.

One effective means of strengthening nuclear non-proliferation is to promote the universality of the IAEA additional protocol. The number of countries which have signed or ratified a protocol has been increasing. Japan has made various contributions to that end and will continue to do so.

Japan welcomes the entry into force of the Treaty between the United States and the Russian Federation on Strategic Offensive Reductions and hopes for the full implementation of the Treaty by both States. Japan also welcomes the submission by Russia and the United States of draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.56, entitled "Bilateral strategic nuclear arms reductions and the new strategic framework". Japan continues to urge all nuclear-weapon States to implement concrete nuclear disarmament measures and to keep other States informed of the progress made.

Mr. Ayalegu (Nigeria): This year marks the twenty-sixth anniversary of the tenth special session of the General Assembly — the first devoted to disarmament — at which Member States agreed that nuclear weapons posed the greatest danger to mankind and to the survival of civilization. The evidence of the danger posed by nuclear weapons was demonstrated by the two atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, which killed over 160,000 people immediately, while at least 50,000 others died later as a result of its radioactive effects.

The Hiroshima bomb had a yield of just 12.5 kilotons. As compared with just three atomic bombs possessed by one State in 1945, the nuclear reality today is that there are over 16,500 nuclear weapons and more than 36,000 nuclear warheads in the hands of five nuclear Powers, not including other nuclear States. Two new States have acquired nuclear weapons every decade since the end of the Second World War. The total stockpile amounts to about 12 billion tons of trinitrotoluene (TNT), which would yield an explosion of about 12,000 megatons; the collective yield and destructive capacity of those nuclear weapons would be equivalent to that of approximately 1 million Hiroshima bombs. Studies by experts have revealed that if those nuclear arsenals, or even a fraction thereof, were to be unleashed in warfare, human civilization as we know it today would be totally annihilated.

That is why nuclear weapons continue to be an issue of grave concern to the international community,

including my delegation. For this reason, the need to implement disarmament and non-proliferation measures continues to be a major challenge in the maintenance of international peace and security.

In our general statement last week, at the 8th meeting, we referred to this challenge as one that can be tackled only through the demonstration of the necessary political will. This is a vital requirement for the realization of our ultimate objective of achieving nuclear disarmament. It involves readiness on the part of the nuclear-weapon States to immediately stop the qualitative improvement, development, production and stockpiling of nuclear warheads and their delivery systems. Once that has been achieved, the next step should be the commencement of multilateral negotiations leading to the early conclusion of a convention prohibiting the development, production, testing, deployment, stockpiling, transfer, threat or use of nuclear weapons and their total elimination. A draft resolution to that effect should be adopted by this Committee as proof of our preparedness to match our words with deeds and to embark on a process of negotiating a convention to ban nuclear weapons. At the same time, it is necessary to stress that any nuclear disarmament process must be irreversible, transparent and verifiable if it is to be meaningful.

The need to face up to this challenge is in keeping with the resolve demonstrated at the Millennium Summit, as expressed in the Millennium Declaration, to strive for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons, and to keep all options open with a view to achieving that aim, including the possibility of convening an international conference to identify ways and means of eliminating nuclear danger.

Pending the total elimination of those weapons, Member States should agree on the establishment of a legally binding international instrument under which the nuclear-weapon States will undertake not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States.

Nigeria firmly believes that nuclear non-proliferation can be meaningfully sustained only if non-nuclear-weapon States that have renounced the development or possession of nuclear weapons are themselves assured, under legally binding agreement, against the use or threat of use of such weapons. By transforming the disparate assurances declared by the

nuclear Powers into a unified, legally binding obligation, the nuclear Powers would not only be fulfilling part of their commitments towards those States but also reinforcing the non-proliferation regime against possible future setbacks.

Nigeria wishes to reaffirm its belief in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as a vital instrument in the maintenance of international peace and security. We endorse the 13 practical steps adopted by the 2000 NPT Review Conference towards systematic and progressive efforts to implement the unequivocal commitment undertaken by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament, to which all States parties are committed under article VI. The International Court of Justice reinforced that principle in 1996 in its advisory opinion on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons.

In line with the final document of the 13th Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement, held in Kuala Lumpur from 20 to 25 February last year, Nigeria wishes to reiterate its longstanding position in favour of the total elimination of all nuclear testing. We stress the significance of achieving universal adherence to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) by all nuclear-weapon States, which, *inter alia*, should contribute to the process of nuclear disarmament. We therefore call upon all States whose ratification is necessary for the entry into force of the Treaty to do so as soon as possible so that the Treaty can enter into force without further delay. Pending its entry into force, it is important to maintain the moratorium on nuclear-weapon-test explosions.

Nigeria acknowledges the importance of bilateral efforts by the two major nuclear Powers in setting in motion the process of reducing strategic offensive nuclear weapons as a positive step towards nuclear disarmament. My delegation, however, shares the view of the vast majority of Member States that a reduction in deployments and in operational status cannot substitute for irreversible cuts in, and the total elimination of, nuclear weapons. Of equal significance is the need for such efforts to be as transparent as possible.

Nigeria wishes to emphasize the importance of strengthening existing multilateral arms control and disarmament agreements by ensuring their effective implementation through full compliance with their

provisions, as well as the need for their universality. The universalization of, and full compliance with, these multilateral instruments — particularly those relating to nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction — remain the surest way of guaranteeing that such weapons do not fall into the hands of non-State actors or terrorists, as called for by resolution 1540 (2004) of the Security Council.

The Nigerian delegation recognizes that the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD I) was a turning point in the history of multilateral efforts to achieve disarmament, in particular nuclear disarmament. It is regrettable that the Final Document of SSOD I has not been implemented 26 years after its adoption. The Nigerian delegation wishes to stress the need to convene SSOD IV in order to give real meaning to the nuclear disarmament process. Consequently, we call upon Member States to adopt a resolution at this session to convene an open-ended working group to prepare for SSOD IV. It is heartening to note that a draft resolution to this effect has been submitted for consideration by the Committee.

My delegation expresses its strong belief in the need to strengthen the existing disarmament machinery in order to advance the process of nuclear disarmament. In this connection, we express regret that, for yet another year, the Conference on Disarmament has failed both to establish a subsidiary body to deal with the issue of nuclear disarmament and to commence negotiations on a non-discriminatory, multilateral and verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for the manufacture of nuclear weapons, as agreed at the 2000 NPT Review Conference. As already stated during the general debate last week, Nigeria reiterates its full support for the Five Ambassadors' (A5) proposal as a mechanism for breaking the existing impasse in reaching a work programme for the Conference on Disarmament. Nigeria also believes that the fissile material cut-off treaty is due for negotiation, but that, for the outcome to be meaningful, it should contain a reliable verification mechanism that should not exclude existing stockpiles. It is our hope that the Conference on Disarmament will begin substantive work on these issues as soon as possible.

Mr. Lew (Republic of Korea): The importance of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as a cornerstone of the international

non-proliferation regime cannot be overemphasized. At this trying time, the NPT is the focus of particular attention on the part of global society, as it faces multiple and daunting challenges. The challenges are attributable to its inherent structural shortfalls as well as to the problem of confronting non-compliance cases. These challenges require serious and creative discussions on ways and means to squarely address the problem at the Review Conference next year.

The disappointing outcome of the third Preparatory Committee of the NPT last May does not allow us any modicum of optimism as to next year's Review Conference. However, given the fact that the States parties to the NPT achieved, against all odds, a remarkable outcome during the previous Review Conference, my delegation has high expectations of further success next year. We believe that it is high time to reaffirm our resolve to preserve and strengthen the cornerstone of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. As the thirty-ninth adherent to the Additional Protocol, we reaffirm our commitment to strengthen the safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). We encourage those States that have not yet signed or ratified the Additional Protocol to do so as soon as possible.

The Republic of Korea has joined the vigorous efforts of the international community to facilitate the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). We have reaffirmed our strong support for the CTBT by subscribing to the joint ministerial statement signed in New York last month. We view the CTBT as an indispensable pillar of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and a logically essential factor in attaining the objective of a world free of nuclear weapons.

While we welcome the progress made so far — 173 countries have signed the Treaty and 33 annex II countries have ratified it — we urge those countries which still need to sign or ratify the Treaty to heed the appeals of the international community without further delay.

It is well known that the Republic of Korea attaches great importance to the early conclusion of a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty on fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. We believe that an effective fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) would greatly contribute to nuclear

disarmament and non-proliferation. We strongly support the early commencement of FMCT negotiations next year.

Ms. Pollack (Canada): As we noted during our opening statement, the universal nature of the membership of the First Committee on disarmament and international security gives a unique status to its discussions and decisions. It is only here that all States can debate an issue that remains a fundamental objective of the international community and to which all States have, in this forum, committed themselves.

It is here in the First Committee that States can discuss their responsibilities in the light of those commitments and recount to the international community both individual and collective achievements. Here, also, during this debate, we have an opportunity to define the work that remains to be done.

In his statement at the 5th meeting of the General Assembly, last month, the Prime Minister of Canada reaffirmed our country's long-standing position that non-proliferation and disarmament remain fundamental pillars of the commitment of the United Nations to international peace and security.

Canada maintains the view that there is no substitute for the basic norms and commitments embodied in the multilateral structure whose cornerstone is the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). The 2005 NPT Review Conference is only months away. We must be well prepared to address the challenges the Treaty now faces, and must ensure that our deliberations leading up to the Conference position us for work that will not only strengthen the NPT's basic aims, but also ensure that its processes are reinforced to withstand future challenges.

In that regard, Canada has advocated overcoming the Treaty's institutional deficit, through annual meetings, a standing Bureau and provision for extraordinary meetings, should the need occur. This will give NPT States parties greater ownership of their Treaty and provide us with a key tool in overseeing its implementation and more effectively addressing challenges to its authority and integrity. We look forward to its adoption at next May's Review Conference.

We cannot risk weakening the NPT's ability to ensure that all its pillars are not undermined. The NPT

review process is an invaluable tool assisting the Treaty's more effective implementation that has, itself, been strengthened since 1995, when the Treaty was extended indefinitely, with the bargain of permanence with accountability. Canada has focused on encouraging transparency, such as enhancing reporting, one of the 13 steps from the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference, which contributes to achieving the NPT's implementation.

The First Committee will debate draft resolutions that strive to elaborate key disarmament steps that have been developed to support and strengthen the NPT. Some of those steps are legal mechanisms already negotiated by the international community, such as the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). While the CTBT's membership steadily grows with each ratification, and while its international monitoring system has been built up steadily into a modern verification regime with global reach, the Treaty's legal entry into force remains frustratingly out of reach. We welcome the appointment of the Special Representative, Ambassador Ramaker, and we urge those 11 States whose ratification is needed for entry into force to find the political will to work within the CTBT to ensure its effectiveness and implementation.

Other disarmament and non-proliferation mechanisms, such as a fissile material cut-off treaty, remain to be negotiated. Some, like the International Atomic Energy Association (IAEA) additional protocols, have been established to keep pace with technology and to make non-proliferation safeguards more effective.

While we continue to work to reinforce the NPT and its supporting structure, we cannot lose sight of one of our basic objectives: namely, the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. The integrity and viability of the NPT depend on continuing strong momentum in nuclear weapons reductions. There can be no going back to the nuclear arms race of the twentieth century. We encourage the nuclear-weapon States to securely reduce and dismantle their nuclear weapon arsenals in an irreversible and verifiable manner. We continue to call on those States outside the Treaty to join as non-nuclear-weapon States.

The international community is currently faced with a number of disarmament and non-proliferation challenges. We expect this Committee to discuss how all States can fully implement universal disarmament

and non-proliferation norms and propose practical options so that the obligations and undertakings of States can be carried out. We must seriously reflect on how to better address these challenges, such as non-compliance, and how to strengthen in a comprehensive manner the NPT's implementation.

One such option remains resumption of work in the sole international body charged with negotiating disarmament instruments. In his statement, Canada's Prime Minister recalled the United Nations "responsibility to deny" (A/59/PV.5, p. 31). He called on the Conference on Disarmament, charged with the responsibility for negotiating new multilateral instruments, to get back to productive work. We look forward to returning to work in the Conference on Disarmament and strongly urge member States to adopt a programme of work based on the balanced proposal that has been before that body for over a year. We will introduce a related draft resolution later in this session.

Mr. Shaw (Australia): Next year's Review Conference Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) will have the task of setting the future nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation agenda. Australia is convinced that a strong and effective NPT is essential to preventing the spread of nuclear weapons, to further progress towards nuclear disarmament and to retain the climate of confidence necessary for cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

We are committed to working with others to address the serious challenges faced by the Treaty. Events since we last met have confirmed that existing NPT verification is insufficient to stop determined proliferators. There should be no doubt that the International Atomic Energy Agency additional protocol, together with the comprehensive safeguards agreement, is the NPT safeguards verification standard required for NPT non-nuclear-weapon States. NPT parties should take a decision to that effect at next year's Review Conference.

The risk of NPT parties misusing the Treaty's peaceful nuclear energy provisions in order to acquire the technical basis for a rapid breakout to nuclear weapons is a serious matter for the international community. The Review Conference will need to take forward the international dialogue on ways to limit the spread of sensitive nuclear technology. As noted in our general debate statement at the 2nd meeting, this is not

a question of reinterpreting the NPT, but of ensuring that actions by NPT parties are true to the Treaty's intent and to the global non-proliferation norm.

We should be clear about what is at stake. The non-proliferation regime provides vital security benefits. But more than that, dealing with nuclear proliferation is fundamental to the goal of nuclear disarmament. It is simply not possible to conceive of a world free of nuclear weapons in the absence of complete and permanent assurances of nuclear non-proliferation.

Australia remains strongly committed to progress on nuclear disarmament and is pleased again to be a sponsor of Japan's draft resolution entitled "A path to the total elimination of nuclear weapons" (A/C.1/59/L.23).

We strongly support the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and are actively pursuing further signatures and ratifications. Along with Japan, Finland and the Netherlands, we were pleased earlier in this session to convene a joint ministerial meeting which underscored that support for the CTBT remains widespread and resolute. Australia is pleased also to be the lead sponsor, with Mexico and New Zealand, of draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.25, on the CTBT. We hope that draft resolution will again attract overwhelming support.

We remain of the view that a fissile material cut-off treaty would significantly advance global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation goals. We stand ready to work to achieve a start to negotiations and to ensure an effective cut-off treaty, including appropriate verification.

In this Committee, we must ensure our efforts are focused on making a practical contribution to the international community's efforts to progress in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Australia looks forward to joining with other delegations in supporting draft resolutions that serve this purpose.

Mr. Vasiliev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): With the end of the cold war and changes in the nature of relations between Russia and the United States, the threat of global nuclear war has substantially decreased, and the bilateral nuclear arms race has become a thing of the past.

Nevertheless, unfortunately, the world has not become safer. Against the backdrop of a restructuring

of the former bipolar world order, regional conflicts and problems of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), including nuclear weapons, have now moved to centre stage. In the twenty-first century, we have also witnessed the emergence of new global threats and challenges — above all, international terrorism.

In these complex circumstances, the Russian Federation considers it to be of fundamental importance that States implement existing international obligations. Renouncing them unilaterally, without agreeing with all interested States on new rules of the game — particularly in the area of international security — would be a direct route to upheaval and instability, with the constant emergence and escalation of new threats to the security of all States without exception.

Consonant with its commitments under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), Russia reaffirms its dedication to the ultimate objective of complete nuclear disarmament. However, that goal must be achieved through a comprehensive, step-by-step approach and in compliance with the principle of the equal security of all States.

Despite the trend towards varying stances in the overall area of nuclear disarmament, significant progress has been made in recent years. The world's nuclear arsenal has been substantially reduced. The Russian Federation reaffirms, not just in words but through its actions, its determination to fully implement its commitments in the area of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. In April and May of this year, at the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2005 NPT Review Conference, we once again submitted detailed information in that respect.

Here, let me describe some of the most important activities in that regard. December 2001 brought the conclusion of the period for the reduction of strategic offensive weapons under Treaty on Strategic Offensive Arms (START I). At that point, the total number of nuclear-weapon delivery vehicles of the United States and Russia had been reduced by a factor of 1.5 with respect to their number in 1991, when the Treaty was signed. Further, the number of nuclear warheads had been reduced by a factor of approximately 1.7. Russia fully — and ahead of the deadline — carried out its

commitments for those reductions. By the deadline of 5 December 2001, Russia had for practical purposes reduced the number of its deployed strategic delivery vehicles of submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) and heavy bombers to 1,136 units and the number of nuclear weapons for those vehicles to 5,518. Along with other verification mechanisms, the START I treaty will remain in force until at least December 2009.

Even after December 2001, Russia continued to reduce the number of its nuclear weapons. In 2003 alone, reductions in warheads for ICBMs, SLBMs and heavy bombers deployed by Russia numbered 458 units. At present, Russia has eliminated a total of 1,250 ICBM and SLBM launchers, 43 strategic nuclear submarines and 65 heavy bombers.

As is well known, in May 2000, Russia ratified the START II treaty. We are not to blame for its not having entered into force. Nevertheless, any gap in the further reduction of strategic offensive arms, as set out in legally binding treaties, has so far been avoided. In May 2002, the Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty, known as the Moscow Treaty, was signed; it entered into force in June 2003. The Moscow Treaty legally enshrined the Russian-American agreement to mutually reduce by the end of 2012 their aggregate number of strategic nuclear warheads to one third of the levels established by the START I Treaty.

Russia was prepared to agree to even more dramatic reductions. Under the new Treaty, further enrichment, strengthening and development its provisions will be considered by a bilateral implementation commission, to be established for that purpose. The Moscow Treaty, like all agreements, was the result of mutual compromise and was possible largely thanks to the new strategic relationship between Russia and the United States, which is enshrined in the joint declaration adopted at the May 2002 Moscow Summit and thanks to the parties' reaffirmation of the close links between strategic offensive and defensive weapons.

Thus, there are clear prospects for further progress towards nuclear disarmament through 2012. It is also important that, at least through 2009, the strategic offensive capacities of Russia and the United States will be under the dual and mutually complementary restriction of two treaties: START I and the Moscow Treaty.

There has also been significant progress in the reduction of non-strategic nuclear weapons. I recall that, in accordance with the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of their Intermediate-range and Shorter-range Missiles (INF Treaty), all land-based missiles of those two classes with a range of 500 to 5,500 kilometres were destroyed, and their further production and testing was banned. Compliance with INF Treaty continues.

Russia, for practical purposes, has implemented the measures that it undertook in the framework of its 1991-1992 unilateral disarmament initiatives regarding non-strategic nuclear weapons, with the exception of the elimination of nuclear warheads of land forces. The process of destroying nuclear warheads for tactical land-based missiles, nuclear artillery shells and nuclear mines is being carried out through the technological capacity of nuclear arms enterprises and with realistic funding levels.

Through laborious and complex operations, all former Soviet nuclear weapons were moved to the territory of Russia. Over the last few years, nuclear weapons stockpiles have been reduced to one-fifth their former number, and the number of storage units for nuclear warheads have been reduced to one-fourth their former number. All strategic nuclear warheads are now located in the central storage sites of the Ministry of Defence. That enables us to concentrate financial resources on nuclear security and reliable storage for nuclear warheads, through the use of modern techniques for storage, protection and preservation.

I would like once again to draw the Committee's attention to the Russian proposal for all nuclear weapons to be moved to the territory of the nuclear State to which they belong. That measure would enhance confidence in safety and security.

The danger attributed to non-strategic nuclear weapons is often groundlessly exaggerated, as are qualitative assessments of stockpiles. All nuclear weapons are equally dangerous. Tactical nuclear weapons, like other nuclear weapons, are part of a complex system that is protected from accidental and unintended use. There has never been a breakdown in the reliable protection and storage of nuclear weapons in Russia. Nevertheless, in recent years, the Russian Federation has taken important additional measures to ensure highly reliable security for the storage and

handling of nuclear weapons. Everything has been done to prevent unauthorized access, including tight restrictions on the relevant information. Russia's responsible position on improving security for the storage and transportation of nuclear weapons could be noted in the special exercises carried out in Russia this year with the participation of 49 observers from 17 States. Those exercises were unprecedented in their openness. We hope that other nuclear-weapon countries will respond by taking similar measures.

Russia has carried out the process of reducing its nuclear arsenals, including those of non-strategic nuclear weapons, in a systematic and consistent fashion, under a targeted federal programme for the elimination and disposal of nuclear warheads. Russia shares the view of many States that the reduction of nuclear weapons must be irreversible. In that context, I would like to note that our nuclear disarmament measures have been accompanied by corresponding reductions in Russia's nuclear weapons sector and arms sector. Thus, we have more than halved our capacity to produce weapons beyond those necessary for defence purposes.

Since 1990, the number of staff members working on defence-related projects in nuclear facilities of the Russian Federation has been reduced by a factor of 1.5. In cooperation with the United States, we are working to halt the operation of Russian uranium-lead reactors, which produce weaponized plutonium. Material they produce in Russia is not used for military purposes; the production of uranium in Russia for nuclear-weapon purposes was halted a long time ago.

Russia has ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), which we consider to be an important multilateral instrument in the area of restricting nuclear weapons and nuclear non-proliferation. At the same time, we continue to have serious concerns regarding the future of the Treaty. We are convinced that efforts to ensure its entry into force must not flag. We call on the States on which entry into force depends immediately and unconditionally to do everything possible to that end. Thus, it is of fundamental importance that until the CTBT enters into force, States should continue to comply with the moratorium on nuclear-weapon-test explosions and all other types of nuclear explosions.

As Russia's experience has shown, nuclear disarmament — including the removal of nuclear

weapons and their means of delivery from operational readiness, their elimination and their disposal — often turns out to be more expensive than the creation of those weapons. We could hardly agree with any assertion to the contrary. Here, we pay tribute to cooperation in the elimination and disposal of nuclear weapons, in which we are engaged with the United States and other States.

Moreover, we must keep in mind that the Russian Federation continues to bear the main burden of financing the elimination of its own nuclear weapons; outside assistance enables us to palpably speed up the process. For example, in one of the most costly areas of nuclear disarmament — the disposal of nuclear submarines — in which we are actively cooperating with our foreign partners, the Russian Federation's share of the expenditures amounts to three fourths of the total.

The process of nuclear disarmament does not take place in a vacuum. In considering the future prospects of that process, we cannot ignore the security interests of the nuclear-weapon States themselves. It is not fortuitous, for example, that the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference states that new steps in the area of nuclear disarmament must be carried out, "in a way that promotes international stability, and based on the principle of undiminished security for all" (NPT/CONF.2000/28 (Part I), Article VI, para. 15 (9)).

The pace and form of Russia's future steps in the area of nuclear disarmament, cannot fail to be influenced by trends in the geo-political situation, by the state of strategic security, by the way our partners take account, in practical terms, of the security interests of the Russian Federation, by the financial and economic capacity of countries and by a number of other factors.

Nuclear disarmament, including reductions in non-strategic nuclear weapons, cannot be carried out in isolation from factors such as: the situation relating to other kinds of weapons; world political developments, especially in Europe; the need to ensure international stability; and the development and expansion of military-political alliances. For that reason, we consider it unrealistic to artificially increase the pace of nuclear disarmament or to demand the imposition of rigid timetables and deadlines. The Russian Federation is ready, in accordance with the obligations it has undertaken, to follow the path of nuclear disarmament

in strengthening the framework of nuclear non-proliferation. The Russian Federation will continue to support realistic and balanced decisions to that end.

The Conference on Disarmament can play an important role here, for example, through its negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

At the present session of the General Assembly, the Russian Federation, together with the United States of America, is submitting for consideration by the First Committee a draft resolution on bilateral strategic nuclear arms and the new strategic framework (A/C.1/59/L.56). It is our intention to make a statement to introduce the draft resolution, and, in that connection, we would like to reserve the possibility of returning to the subject of nuclear disarmament at a later stage of our thematic discussion.

Ms. Sanders (United States of America): Fundamentally, the United States supports the negotiation in the Conference on Disarmament of a ban, in the form of a legally-binding fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT), on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. As many members know, I announced the results of the United States review of such a cut-off treaty in a speech on 29 July, at a plenary meeting of the Conference. Our experts in Washington put a considerable amount of thought into the review. As a result of the review, the United States believes that an FMCT cannot be verified effectively.

The United States sent a team of verification experts to Geneva last month to brief on how we reached that conclusion. The nature of an FMCT imposes significant practical limits on its verification. An FMCT would ban the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, while allowing production for other activities not subject to an FMCT. Under the safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), finding undeclared fissile material in a State under safeguards is sufficient to make a judgement of non-compliance. However, simply finding fissile material not declared under an FMCT would be insufficient to make a judgement of non-compliance. It would be only the starting point, really, given that both date of production and purpose of production would then have to be proven.

The United States has maintained a moratorium on the production of fissile material for weapons purposes for more than 15 years. While other Governments have announced their own suspension of production, the moratorium is far from universal. The United States believes that fruitlessly negotiating verification procedures would delay unnecessarily the creation of a ban on the production of fissile material for nuclear explosive devices. It is imperative for an FMCT to be negotiated while it could still be relevant. The objective of an FMCT is not its verification, but the creation of an observed norm against the production of fissile material intended for weapons.

Faced with those issues and other problems that our experts detailed in Geneva, we must rethink how to approach an FMCT in the Conference on Disarmament. In considering this year's First Committee draft resolution on this subject, we must all ask whether the overall result will promote prospects for getting an FMCT in place or damage them.

Mr. Paranhos (Brazil) (spoke in Spanish): I am speaking on behalf of the States members of the Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR) — Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay — and the associated States Bolivia, Chile and Peru.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is the cornerstone of the international disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation system. As a universal instrument, the NPT stipulates various obligations that are legally binding on nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States. The Treaty is based upon a delicate balance of rights and obligations. The nuclear-weapon States commit themselves to adopting, in good faith, effective nuclear disarmament measures, and to not transfer to any other State nuclear weapons or other such assets. The non-nuclear weapons States, for their part, pledge not to acquire nuclear weapons and to accept safeguards, without prejudice to their right to develop and use nuclear energy for exclusively peaceful purposes.

Those rights and obligations are clearly spelled out in the Treaty. However, signals are now being sent inclining us to think that some countries may be seeking to reinterpret them. Ideas and proposals in that vein are unacceptable and contradict the spirit and the letter of the NPT.

As States that have foregone the nuclear option and as parties to the world's first nuclear-weapons-free

zone, we continue our determined appeal for strict observance of all the obligations set out in the NPT and of the commitments agreed upon at the 1995 and 2000 NPT Review Conferences. In particular, we reaffirm the need for full implementation of the 13 steps agreed to in 2000.

In the view of the expanded MERCOSUR, disarmament and non-proliferation are two sides of the same coin. Without a multilateral process of transparent, verifiable and irreversible nuclear disarmament, we will not be able to avoid the dangers of nuclear proliferation.

In that connection, we emphasize the need to comply with the disarmament obligations envisaged under article VI of the NPT, and to honour the inalienable right, set out in article IV, of all States to engage in researching, producing and using nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, and to receive transfers of material, equipment and scientific and technological information for such purposes.

The prohibition and total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only guarantee that those weapons will not fall into the hands of terrorists. Thus, with solid credentials in the field of non-proliferation, our countries will continue to participate constructively in the discussions that it is hoped will lead to the irreversible process of nuclear disarmament. Only a comprehensive plan that includes elements of disarmament, verification, assistance and cooperation can guarantee the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Here, allow me to say that we, the member countries of the expanded MERCOSUR, will be active participants in the seventh NPT Review Conference, cooperating with Ambassador Sergio Duarte, President-elect of the Conference, to ensure the success of its work. In terms of the outcome, in our view the final document of the seventh Review Conference must contain specific commitments that will enable us to preserve the NPT's balance of rights and obligations.

As regards the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), the expanded MERCOSUR was the first subregion whose members formally became parties to the CTBT, reflecting the historic commitment of our countries to further develop mechanisms and instruments in the areas of non-proliferation of nuclear arms and other weapons of mass destruction.

As everyone knows, the CTBT is an instrument of particular importance in the area of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. As an integral part of the commitments that in 1995 made the indefinite extension of the NPT possible, the entry into force of the CTBT would free the world from nuclear testing, contributing in that way to the systematic and progressive reduction of nuclear arms, as well as to preventing and combating nuclear proliferation. We have made major strides along those lines. Today, the CTBT enjoys almost universal membership, with 173 States signatories and ratification by 119 States. As will be recalled, a key prerequisite for the entry into force of the Treaty is ratification by 44 designated States. Unfortunately, 11 of those still have not moved to ratify it.

We urge all States that have not already done so, in particular those States listed in annex II to the Treaty, to sign or ratify the CTBT — whichever applies — so that the Treaty can enter into force as soon as possible. Those countries need to make their intentions with regard to the Treaty extremely clear. Launching an international monitoring system without a clear prospect for the entry into force of the CTBT would create a paradox: an international monitoring system cannot operate without the entry into force of the legal obligations that it is supposed to monitor. The initialization of the international monitoring system must not be hastened for purely technical reasons that fail to take into account the universal and non-discriminatory nature of the Treaty that created the system. We note with satisfaction efforts to identify measures to promote the entry into force of the Treaty. The Conferences on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Treaty are important steps in that regard.

The countries of the expanded MERCOSUR, while affirming their readiness to promote universal accession to the CTBT, declare their keen support for the maintenance of the moratorium on nuclear testing until the CTBT can enter into force.

Mr. Fessler (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): My delegation is pleased that the plan to hold substantive thematic interactive debates has finally become a reality with today's debate on nuclear weapons. This is unquestionably an excellent way to provide sorely needed momentum in the work of our Committee.

Allow me, as an introduction to the debate, to make a few general comments. For my country, disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons are inextricably and indivisibly linked. Verifiable and irreversible nuclear arms reductions are an integral part of our non-proliferation efforts. How can we strengthen non-proliferation when there are still countries that continue to possess nuclear weapons and refuse to ratify international disarmament and non-proliferation agreements?

Moreover, the increased risk of nuclear proliferation — a question that I took up in greater detail during the general debate — is connected to the fact that some nuclear-weapon States continue to develop their nuclear capacities and/or remain outside the disarmament and non-proliferation regimes. Indeed, the recent discovery of a black market in nuclear weapons components and technologies has clearly highlighted that the most dangerous source of supply can be found in countries that have shirked the obligations of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

The existence of a black market in nuclear weapons components and technologies is even more disturbing in that it opens the possibility of access to such materials by terrorist groups. In that regard, we welcome Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). My country also supports the efforts undertaken to that end by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Finally, Switzerland hails the Group of eight (G-8) Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction, in which it participates, as well as the Proliferation Security Initiative.

In order to make concrete progress in the area of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, there is a need to preserve and bolster the gains achieved and to begin preparation for subsequent stages. Concerning those gains, we must step up efforts to ensure the universalization of the NPT, which remains the cornerstone of the disarmament and non-proliferation regime. I cannot stress enough the importance of the upcoming 2005 Review Conference.

Secondly, it is necessary to strengthen the IAEA verification and monitoring system, in particular with regard to the ban on and struggle against black markets in nuclear components and technology, as well as for non-proliferation in general.

Finally, there is a need to begin without delay the negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty at the Conference on Disarmament on the basis of the existing mandate. In that regard, my country is not convinced by the argument that such a treaty would not be susceptible to effective verification. The issue of verification must be an integral part of the negotiations.

Regarding the subsequent stages, given that existing nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation agreements are far from sufficient, we must, first of all, redouble our efforts to formulate new agreements and protocols in this area. Next, we must push for the entry into force and implementation of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which is of urgent importance for international security. We also need to take more seriously the danger that non-State actors may acquire access to weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons and radioactive materials, and agree on appropriate action in that regard.

The Moscow Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reductions is a very positive step here, but we must prompt nuclear-weapon States to make greater efforts to reduce and, indeed, to totally eliminate such weapons, while at the same time implementing measures that will progressively reduce the role of nuclear weapons in their military strategies and doctrines. Finally, nuclear-weapon States must immediately halt their research and development on new generations of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Percaya (Indonesia): I am taking the floor to address some issues of particular concern to my delegation.

My delegation expresses once again its concern at the threat to humanity stemming from the continued existence of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. Article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) requires nuclear-weapon States to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to the cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament.

At the 2000 NPT Review Conference, the parties reaffirmed their obligation to undertake unequivocally the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals. However, we see that, in reality, nuclear-weapon States did not take that obligation seriously. Accordingly, many States in the rest of the world are hesitant to

strengthen the enforcement of non-proliferation because they believe that the nuclear-weapon States are not committed to disarmament. Furthermore, some States that have given up their nuclear programmes are particularly frustrated.

Like it or not, the nuclear-weapon States must address the disarmament issue more directly than they have in the past. By complying with their political obligations under the NPT, nuclear-weapon States will bring greater leverage to their efforts to convince others to accept and enforce tougher non-proliferation rules.

We are increasingly worried by recent developments, as we see that some nuclear-weapon States are now developing new types of nuclear weapons. That effort is contrary to their obligations under the NPT, which calls for nuclear-weapon States to work to reduce their arsenals to zero. The idea of developing new types of nuclear weapons is completely against the provisions of the NPT. More important, it would spur a new global arms race.

Mr. Gala López (Cuba) (spoke in Spanish): Nuclear disarmament and international security are closely linked. The survival of humankind depends on the total elimination of nuclear weapons. However, there are attempts to replace nuclear disarmament with the issue of horizontal proliferation. Some States are seeking to impose an approach that seems to treat non-proliferation as an end in itself, when, in fact, it must be viewed as a contribution to the efforts to achieve the ultimate objective of disarmament.

Although many years have passed since the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) entered into force, not only have we failed to attain the ultimate goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons, but we are witnessing a very disturbing movement backwards, including efforts to develop new kinds of nuclear weapons. It is clear that some nuclear Powers do not have the political will necessary to attain the goal of the elimination and prohibition of those weapons once and for all. It is unacceptable that there is a lack of progress towards compliance with the unequivocal commitment to achieve the total elimination of nuclear weapons, undertaken by the nuclear-weapon States at the 2000 NPT Review Conference.

The outcome document of the seventh NPT Review Conference, to be held in 2005, must contain

practical commitments that clearly reflect the responsibilities and the role of nuclear-weapon States in the nuclear disarmament process, which must be transparent, verifiable and irreversible.

Cuba rejects the selective application of the NPT. Issues concerning nuclear disarmament and the peaceful use of nuclear energy cannot be put off forever as we focus on horizontal proliferation. Until universal nuclear disarmament is achieved, effective agreements are needed to guarantee the security of non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

The unilateral declarations of nuclear-weapon States in 1995 are clearly inadequate, particularly in the light of various developments since them. With respect to the guarantees given under additional protocols to the treaties on nuclear-weapon-free zones, the experience of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, for example, shows clearly that those guarantees have not been sufficient either. For that reason, Cuba strongly supports the creation at the 2005 NPT Review Conference of a subsidiary body to deal in depth with security guarantees. We cannot continue to delay concluding a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument on security guarantees for non-nuclear weapon States, such as my country.

Cuba shares concerns about the threat of links being forged between terrorism and weapons of mass destruction and fully supports legitimate international efforts, based on full respect for international law and the United Nations Charter, to prevent terrorists from acquiring such weapons. The possibility of terrorist attacks using weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, cannot be eliminated by taking a selective approach limited to fighting horizontal proliferation and ignoring vertical proliferation and disarmament. A multilateral, non-discriminatory approach is the only truly effective way to fight the possible use of weapons of mass destruction by terrorists and by States. The prohibition and the total elimination of those weapons, in particular nuclear weapons, is the only real guarantee against the use or the threat of use of such weapons.

Mr. Gumbi (South Africa): The threat posed by nuclear weapons is real, and few would disagree that the possibility that nuclear weapons could be used represents a continued risk to humanity. We must therefore guard against talking about nuclear weapons

as purely inanimate objects, reciting numbers growing or numbers diminishing.

It is accepted that the only guarantee against the use of such weapons is their complete elimination and the assurance that they will never be produced again. However, the onus to effect nuclear disarmament — that is to say, to get rid of nuclear weapons — rests primarily on those States that possess such weapons.

The longer nuclear weapons exist, the longer the world will have to wait to be free from the use or threat of use of such weapons and the longer fears will persist that such weapons could also fall into the wrong hands. South Africa believes that ignoring the interrelationship between nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation would be at our own peril. Nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament are mutually reinforcing processes that will require continuous and irreversible progress on both fronts. In addition, it has been agreed that nuclear disarmament is not part of some ultimate objective, but is rather a milestone to be reached on the way to the real objective of the disarmament process, namely, general and complete disarmament.

In South Africa's view, there can be no doubt that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) remains the foundation of nuclear disarmament. The consensus agreement at the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT on the unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals, leading to nuclear disarmament — to which all States parties are committed — was intended to be only a first step in that process. To fulfil their obligations under the Treaty, both the nuclear-weapon States and the non-nuclear-weapon States were to implement practical steps for systematic and progressive efforts to eliminate nuclear weapons.

If we fail to ensure that the agreements reached are implemented and fulfilled, the danger exists that the Treaty will continue to follow a circular path of continuous attempts to reach agreements again and again on issues that have been agreed upon and dealt with previously. The first stark example of that practice comprises the 1995 and 2000 agreements calling for signatures, ratifications and the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), which must now be promoted again. The second example comprises the 1990, 1995 and 2000

agreements on security assurances, which also must now be promoted again.

South Africa continues to believe that multilaterally negotiated, legally binding security assurances must be given by the nuclear-weapon States to all non-nuclear-weapon States. That will be pursued at the 2005 NPT Review Conference in the context of working papers on security assurances circulated at Preparatory Committee meetings. South Africa therefore strongly supports the establishment of a subsidiary body at the 2005 Review Conference to give particular attention to this issue. However, pending the conclusion of negotiations on security assurances, the nuclear-weapon States should fully respect their existing commitments in that regard.

The Treaty must be implemented in all its aspects without favour or prejudice. It is not prudent to hold onto any privilege or favour to the detriment of the Treaty as a whole. No aspect should be allowed to lag behind any other. No aspect should be more strictly enforced or should require stricter implementation than any other. As a multilateral instrument that was negotiated and equally agreed to by the members of the international community, the Treaty must be implemented equally in all its aspects.

In conclusion, my delegation wishes to associate itself with the statement made earlier by the representative of Sweden on behalf of the New Agenda Coalition.

Mr. Cynkin (United States of America): As members are aware, some argue that there is a question concerning compliance by the nuclear-weapon States with Article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). With regard to the United States, any such suggestion is both unjust and untrue. Many members of the Committee were present last spring when Mr. Stephen Rademaker, United States Assistant Secretary of State for Arms Control, briefed the Preparatory Committee for the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT about United States actions in compliance with Article VI, and I would like to follow up on those remarks.

The United States has dismantled more than 13,000 nuclear weapons since 1988. Worldwide, we have withdrawn from active service more than 3,000 tactical nuclear warheads, consisting of artillery shells, warheads for short-range missile systems and navy depth bombs. We dismantled the last of those 3,000

warheads in the year 2003. By doing that, we eliminated nearly 90 per cent of our non-strategic nuclear weapons.

With regard to strategic weapons, the United States has eliminated more than 1,000 strategic nuclear missiles, and strategic reductions will continue as set forth in the Moscow Treaty. Once the Moscow Treaty reductions have been completed, in the year 2012, the United States will have reduced by approximately 80 per cent the strategic nuclear weapons that we had deployed in 1991.

Reductions in the number of operationally deployed weapons have paved the way for a major reduction, announced earlier this year by the National Nuclear Security Administration, in the size of the total United States nuclear stockpile. And, by 2012, the United States nuclear stockpile will be the smallest that it has been in several decades. We would also note that the United States has not produced fissile material for use in nuclear weapons for 15 years. That is a moratorium that we intend to continue, and it is one that we once again call on others to adopt pending the negotiation and entry into force of a legally binding fissile material cut-off treaty.

To our surprise, some have criticized those steps, claiming that they are insufficient, not transparent and easily reversed. I would remind such critics that, 10 years ago, the United States declared that it would place nuclear material considered in excess of defence needs under international safeguards. We have honoured that commitment with a vigorous programme that has removed huge amounts of nuclear material from weapons that we have permanently destroyed. We are proud to confirm that, since 1994, the International Atomic Energy Agency has conducted visits concerning 174 tons of such material. Frankly, the United States cannot imagine a more meaningful or transparent disarmament measure.

The United States is proud of its arms control accomplishments, including our arms control collaboration with the Russian Federation. Along with our Russian partners, we hope to proceed with a draft resolution here in the near future to demonstrate to the international community the progress that we have made in compliance with article VI. We hope that our draft resolution will command a consensus.

Ms. Lundemo (Norway): As the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)

continues to be under considerable strain, it is of paramount importance that we increase our efforts to preserve and strengthen the authority and integrity of the Treaty. The most urgent priority must be to ensure a positive and balanced outcome of the Review Conference in 2005.

Credible verification is vital in order to ensure that all States parties are meeting their NPT commitments, and thus for the Treaty's credibility. Hence, all NPT States parties must fulfil their basic obligations by signing and implementing the International Atomic Energy Agency's comprehensive safeguards.

Furthermore, we urge all States parties to conclude and bring into force the Model Additional Protocol. We expect that the 2005 Review Conference of the NPT will decide that the Additional Protocol is mandatory under article III of the Treaty.

The lack of universality of the NPT continues to be of great concern, and we call for renewed efforts by all States to achieve universal adherence to the Treaty. It is crucial to engage States that are not parties to the NPT in constructive non-proliferation efforts. Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) reaffirms that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is a threat to international peace and security and instructs Member States to do more to halt the spread of such weapons. Multilateral cooperation must be strengthened in order to support the implementation of the resolution.

Norway is firmly committed to the disarmament obligations contained in article VI of the NPT and further elaborated at the 2000 Review Conference. We reiterate that we need a balanced, step-by-step and incremental approach to nuclear disarmament. While we are lagging behind in fulfilling the 2000 obligations, we need to keep in mind that there have been considerable reductions in nuclear arsenals since the end of the cold war.

The Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Strategic Offensive Reductions is an important contribution to this process and to strategic stability. However, we need additional and irreversible cuts in nuclear arsenals, including in the stockpiles of tactical nuclear weapons.

Norway regrets that the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) has not yet entered into force.

We appreciate the fact that nuclear-weapon States abide by the moratorium on nuclear-weapon tests. However, such unilateral steps cannot substitute for the significance of the legally binding commitment provided by the CTBT. We urge all countries, and in particular the nuclear-weapon States, to ratify the CTBT without delay or additional conditions.

For the same reason, negotiations on a verifiable multilateral treaty banning the production of fissile materials for weapons purposes (FMCT) are long overdue. We deeply regret that the impasse in the Conference on Disarmament has blocked such negotiations, which represent the next logical step on the multilateral disarmament agenda. A credible and verifiable FMCT is essential for closing loopholes in the nuclear non-proliferation regime.

In the meantime, we call upon all nuclear-weapon States to declare and reconfirm their moratorium on the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons and nuclear explosive devices and to implement transparency measures related to production and stocks.

To conclude, the NPT is a cornerstone of our collective security. We all have a responsibility to contribute to the Treaty's vitality and to ensure a successful outcome of the upcoming Review Conference.

Mr. Heinsberg (Germany): In addition to what was said earlier by the Netherlands European Union presidency on the issue, Germany would like to make the following observations.

The threats posed by the proliferation of nuclear weapons, which have become more apparent than ever, have underlined more than ever the need to safeguard and strengthen the multilateral treaty system and, in that context in particular, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

The NPT has established a firm relationship between non-proliferation and disarmament and vice versa. Those two goals can only effectively be pursued jointly and not at each other's expense. It is particularly important to recall that in view of rising concerns not only regarding continuing proliferation and non-compliance with non-proliferation obligations, but also regarding the slow progress in the field of nuclear disarmament and indications of a so-called renaissance of nuclear weapons.

With the end of the cold war, new opportunities for nuclear disarmament have arisen. Those opportunities need to be seized. Germany holds the view that a nuclear-weapon-free world — that is, the complete elimination of nuclear weapons — can be achieved only by way of an incremental approach. Such an approach also underlies the 13 practical steps for the systematic and progressive implementation of article VI of the NPT adopted by the 2000 NPT Review Conference. Those 13 steps remain the performance benchmark for the disarmament process.

A key element in that process is a fissile material cut-off treaty. It would strengthen both nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, and thus international security. Germany calls for the immediate start of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on the basis of the report of the special coordinator and the mandate contained therein of a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally verifiable Treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices.

The Chairman (spoke in Spanish): I now suspend the formal part of our meeting to continue our discussion in an informal format.

The meeting was suspended at 12.15 p.m. and resumed at 1 p.m.

The Chairman (spoke in Spanish): I give the floor to the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, who wishes to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

Mr. Ri Jang Gon (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): I wish to exercise the right of reply to address the delegation of the Netherlands, which spoke on behalf of the European Union, and the delegation of Japan. My delegation strongly rejects the allegations made by the delegation of the Netherlands, on behalf of the European Union, and by the delegation of Japan. What they claimed in their statements is not correct. They are completely biased. They are intentionally

ignoring the real nature of the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula.

The nuclear issue is the product of the hostile policy of the United States towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Thus, it should be resolved bilaterally between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States. Because of that fact, the Agreed Framework between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States was established. However, it was destroyed through the unilateral acts of the United States. If the Agreed Framework had been implemented, the nuclear issue would have already been resolved. The unilateral United States abrogation of the Agreed Framework and that country's snowballing military threats have compelled us to immediately lift the freeze of nuclear facilities and resume their operation. These acts of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea have proven to be legitimate for self-defence against ever-increasing outside nuclear threats.

My delegation advises the delegation of the Netherlands, speaking on behalf of the European Union, and the delegation of Japan not simply to follow the super-Power blindly. Instead, they should urge the United States to scrap its hostile policy towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which is the main cause of the nuclear issue and which will be a decisive factor in the later resolution of the nuclear issue.

Lastly, before concluding, let me add some words for the delegation of Japan. I also wish to try to draw the attention of the Member States to this. Japan is the country that has military bases with nuclear weapons and is pursuing ultra-militarism in East Asia. That is a fact. I advise Japan that, before saying anything about the nuclear issue, it should dismantle all its military bases with nuclear weapons and recognize its past crimes against humanity.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.